

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

The above Amendments and these Remarks are in reply to the Office Action mailed December 12, 2007.

I. Summary of Examiner's Rejections

Prior to the Final Office Action mailed December 12, 2007, claims 1, 2, 4-7, 9, 10, 12-14, 16-18, 20-22, 24-28, and 30-33 were pending in the Application. Claims 1-2, 4-7, 9-10, 12-14, 16-18, 20-22, and 24-28 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,101,506 to Ukai et al., in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,894,333 to Kanda et al. Claims 30-33 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Ukai in view of Kanda as applied to claims 1, 9, 17, and 25 above, and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,238,106 to Rosati.

II. Summary of Applicants' Amendments

The present Response amends claims 4-5, 7, 10, 12-13, 16, 18, 20-22, 24, 31-33, cancels claims 25-28 and 30, and adds new claims 34-44, leaving for the Examiner's present consideration claims 1-2, 4-7, 9-10, 12-14, 16-18, 20-22, 24, and 31-44. Reconsideration of the Application and of the claims in light of the following arguments is respectfully requested.

III. Additional Amendments

Claims 34-44 have been newly added by the present Response. Limitations from Figs. 5A-B of the Application have been added to new independent claim 34. Applicants respectfully submit that no new matter is being added in new claims 34-44. Applicants respectfully request that these claims be included in the Application and considered therewith.

IV. Claims Rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

Claims 1-2, 4-7, 9-10, 12-14, 16-18, 20-22, 24-28, and 30-33 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,101,506 to Ukai et al., in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,894,333 to Kanda et al.

Claim 1

Claim 1 defines:

1. (Previously presented) A method of organizing a plurality of objects, comprising the steps of:
 - receiving user selections of multiple objects from the plurality of objects;
 - creating one or more groups of objects from the multiple objects;
 - designating a representative object for each of the groups of objects;
 - searching the plurality of objects using a search parameter, and
 - for the plurality of objects that meet the search parameter and that are part of one or more groups, returning the representative objects of any groups of which any of the particular plurality of objects that meet the search parameter is a member; and
 - for particular ones of the plurality of objects that meet the search parameter and that are not part of one or more groups, returning the particular objects;
 - displaying the returned representative objects of the groups of objects, the returned representative objects improving organization of objects and saving display space; and
 - displaying the particular objects.

Claim 1 requires searching the plurality of objects using a search parameter, and for the plurality of objects that meet the search parameter and that are part of one or more groups, *returning the representative objects* of groups of which any of the plurality of objects that meet the search parameter are members; and for particular ones of the plurality of objects that meet the search parameter and that are not part of one or more groups, the method returns the particular objects. (Spec., paras. 0118, 0121, and 0116).

Ukai discloses a method and system for managing files by version. Regarding searching, the user can select an all-file search or a representative-file search. The range of search can be limited to the representative files with a view to reduce the time taken for the search. (col. 20, lines 43-45 and 52-53). For a representative file search selected in step 2045, the files having the leading version names in the file groups each including files allocated with the same name in the rack database 30 shown in Fig. 4 are set as the files to be subjected to the search processing in step 2055. For example, the files having such version names as "Vol. 5" in the files "Hitachi Catalog" or version name "Summer, '96" in the files "BB Wear" of Fig. 4 are subjected to the search processing. In step 2045, when the button "All Files" is clicked, all the files are subjected to the search in the step 2055. In step 2060, for either the representative file search or the all file search, the result of the search is displayed in step 2065. (col. 21, lines 5-18 and 27-28).

Claim 1 requires that *for the plurality of objects that meet the search parameter* and that are part of one or more groups, *returning the representative objects* of groups of which any of the plurality of objects that meet the search parameter are members. Ukai, on the other hand, discloses a representative file search that searches only the representative files in order to reduce the time taken for the search. Searching the representative files as disclosed in Ukai, however, is not the same as searching the plurality of objects (all files), as required by claim 1. Further, Ukai discloses an all file search that searches all files, but in step 2065 all files returned are displayed. Thus, an all file search that returns all files that meet the search criteria as disclosed in Ukai is not the same as an all file search that returns only the representative files, as required by claim 1.

Claim 1 further requires that for particular ones of the plurality of objects that meet the search parameter and *that are not part of one or more groups*, the method returns the particular objects. Ukai does not teach or suggest that any of the files are not part of one or more groups. Because one main purpose of Ukai is to manage files by version, Ukai instead discloses grouping all files. Thus, Ukai does not disclose that for particular ones of the plurality of objects that meet the search parameter and that are not part of one or more groups, the method returns the particular objects, as required by claim 1.

Claim 1 further requires searching the plurality of objects using a search parameter. Kanda discloses a representative image display method for video images. In Fig. 6, each scene display area 156 displays the representative image of that scene and a scene partition data display area 158 displays each scene's start point (start time) and end point (end time). (col. 7, lines 26-32). The user first selects a scene. For example, in Fig. 14, the topmost scene is selected. Next, the specified time is entered, for example, through a keyboard, and the "current time" in Fig. 14 is initialized with the specified time. In the figure, the allowable input is in the range of scene start time 00:00:00:00 to end time 00:02:04:20. In the example of Fig. 14, the time 00:01:02:28 is specified. The user can use playback button 153 to playback the motion image for the selected scene and a stop button 154 stop the motion image being played back. (col. 7, lines 21-23; col. 9, lines 29-30 and 36-41).

In Kanda, the *plurality of objects* is images from scenes, such as the three separate scenes shown in Fig. 14. Each scene is a group of images (*group of objects*), and the representative image is the image representing the "group." In Kanda, however, the user first selects a scene. From the scene (group) the user enters a designated time (*search parameter*). Kanda discloses

that the user performs a search on one scene (group), not a search on images from all of the scenes (plurality of objects). Thus, performing a search on one group in plurality of objects, as disclosed in Kanda, is not the same as searching the plurality of objects, as required by claim 1.

As such, Applicants respectfully submit that Ukai and Kanda fail to teach or suggest searching the plurality of object using a search parameter, and for the plurality of objects that meet the search parameter and that are part of one or more groups, *returning the representative objects* of groups of which any of the plurality of objects that meet the search parameter are members; and for particular ones of the plurality of objects that meet the search parameter and that are not part of one or more groups, the method returns the particular objects, as required by claim 1. For at least these reasons, Applicants respectfully submit that the embodiment defined by claim 1 is neither anticipated nor obvious in view of Ukai and Kanda, taken alone or in combination, and reconsideration thereof is respectfully requested.

Claims 9 and 17

The comments provided above with respect to claim 1 are hereby incorporated by reference. For similar reasons as provided above with respect to claim 1, Applicants respectfully submit that the embodiments defined by claims 9 and 17 are likewise neither anticipated by, nor obvious in view of Ukai and Kanda, and reconsideration thereof is respectfully requested.

Claims 2, 10, and 18

Claims 2, 10, and 18 require that one or more of the plurality of objects comprises membership in more than one of the one or more groups of objects. It was stated in the Office Action that an object [a particular photograph (file) for example] may be part of more than one group [may be in both a catalog and an album, or even in two different catalogs for example]. (Ukai, figs. 1-4). One main point of the system disclosed in Ukai is to manage files by version, each of these objects (files) is part of only one group. Theoretically, a file could be in both a catalog and an album, for example, but Ukai does not disclose this.

In the Office Action, it was also stated that an object [Hitachi Catalog Vol. 3] may be part of [linked into (35)] more than one group [Hitachi Catalog and Hitachi Catalog 2]. (Ukai, fig. 4) Ukai discloses that a plurality of files can be created on the basis of a given document file. These files cannot be managed only with the aid of the version, so a link-destination file name is

used. In the Hitachi Catalog example, for the file labeled “Hitachi Catalog” and the version name “Vol. 3” the link-destination is “Hitachi Catalog 2,” which means that a series of files having the file name “Hitachi Catalog 2” are derived from “Hitachi Catalog, Vol. 3.” (Ukai, col. 11, lines 39-49). The series of files in Hitachi Catalog 2 are separate from the “Hitachi Catalog files.”

Claims 2, 10, and 18 require that one or more of the plurality of objects comprises membership in more than one of the one or more groups of objects. As disclosed in Ukai, on the other hand, “linked into (35)” is a pointer, which is not the same as “being part of” more than one group. Thus, Ukai does not disclose that one or more of the plurality of objects comprises membership in more than one of the one or more groups of objects, as required by these claims.

For at least this reason, Applicants respectfully submit that the embodiment defined by claims 2, 10, and 18 is neither anticipated nor obvious in view of Ukai or Kanda, taken alone or in combination, and reconsideration thereof is respectfully requested.

Claims 4-7, 12-14, 16, 20-22, and 24

Claims 4, 12, and 20 have been amended to more clearly define that wherein the step of displaying the representative *object* of the group further includes not displaying the other objects of the group, and indicating that the object being displayed is a representative *object* of the group.

Claims 5, 13, and 21 have been amended to more clearly define adding the additional object to *one or more of the groups of objects*, responsive to the detecting step.

Claims 7, 16, and 24 have been amended to more clearly define changing the representative object of any of the groups.

Otherwise, these claims are not addressed separately but it is respectfully submitted that these claims are allowable in view of the comments provided above. Applicants respectfully submit that these claims are similarly neither anticipated by, nor obvious in view of, the cited references, and reconsideration thereof is respectfully requested. It is also submitted that these claims also add their own limitations, which render them patentable in their own right. Applicants respectfully reserve the right to argue these limitations should it become necessary in the future.

Claims 25-28 and 30

Claims 25-28 and 30 have been canceled by the present Response, rendering moot the rejection of these claims.

Claims 31-33 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Ukai in view of Kanda as applied to claims 1, 9, 17 and 25 above, and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,238,106 to Rosati.

Claims 31-33

Claims 31-33 are not addressed separately, but it is respectfully submitted that these claims are allowable in view of the comments provided above. Applicants respectfully submit that claims 31-33 are similarly neither anticipated by, nor obvious in view of the cited references, and reconsideration thereof is respectfully requested. It is also submitted that these claims also add their own limitations which render them patentable in their own right. Applicants respectfully reserve the right to argue these limitations should it become necessary in the future.

V. Conclusion

In light of the above, it is respectfully submitted that all of the claims now pending in the subject patent application should be allowable, and reconsideration of the claims is respectfully requested. The Examiner is respectfully requested to telephone the undersigned if she can assist in any way in expediting issuance of a patent.

The Commissioner is authorized to charge any underpayment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 06-1325 for any matter in connection with this response, including any fee for extension of time, which may be required.

Respectfully submitted,

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